

Chain Bridge to Georgetown University - The roadway views between Chain Bridge and Georgetown University are generally characterized by the re-created historic wall on the canal side and dense trees growing on the steep slopes on the bluff side. From the roadway, the wall and overgrown vegetation obscure most views of the river and canal. Glimpses of the canal and river

Georgetown - The scenic quality of this section is distinctly urban. Vibrant colors of the storefronts, historic buildings such as the Old Stone House and interesting architectural elements such as the golden dome of the Riggs National Bank, contribute to the dynamic visual character of this area.

### The 'Urban Scene' at Georgetown





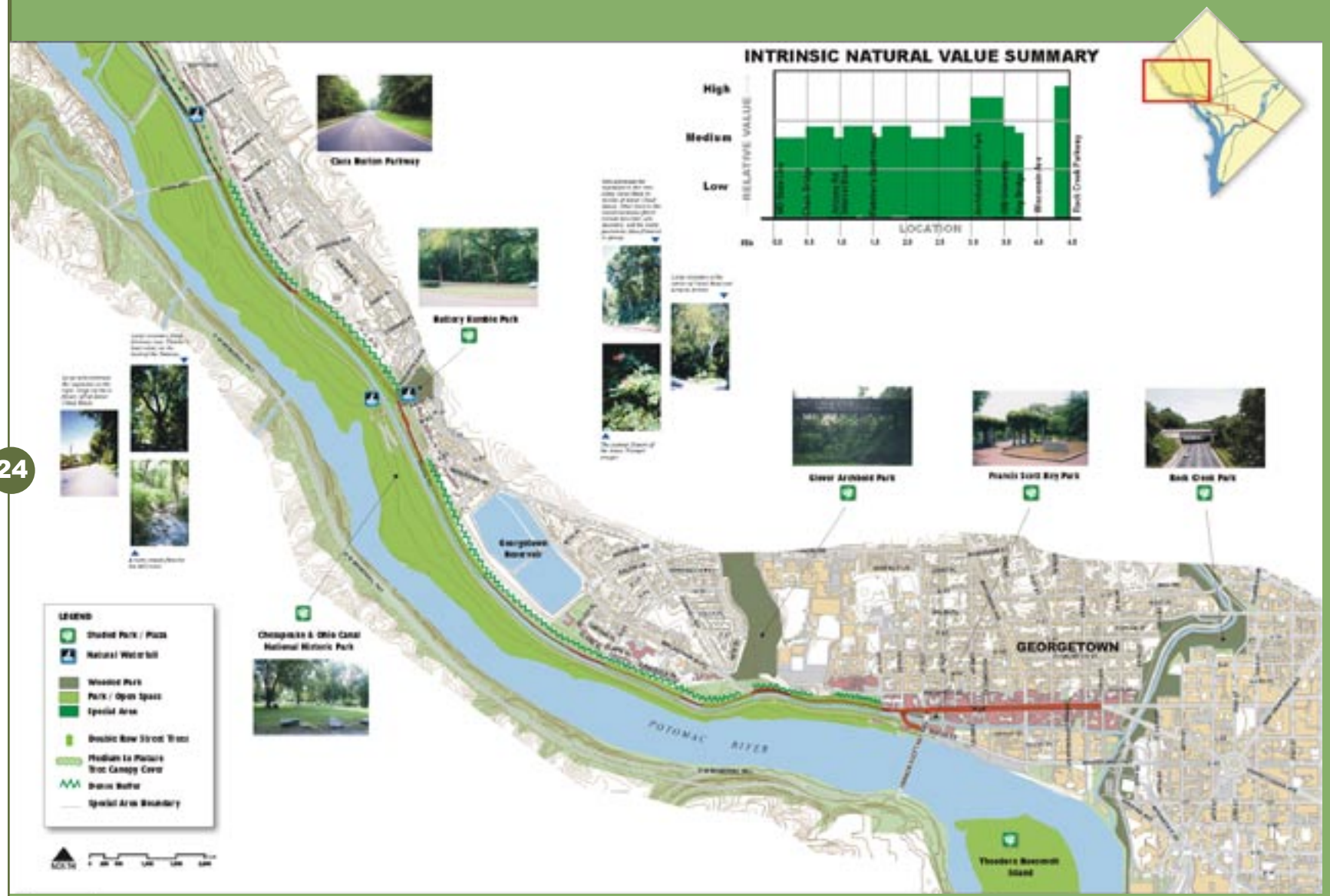


Fig. 3-3 **NATURAL INTRINSIC RESOURCES**

### 3 Intrinsic Qualities Natural Resource Assessment

The single, greatest influence in shaping the land of the Canal Road corridor has been the Potomac River. The landscape we see today reflects the underlying geologic development of a river valley, with its associated terraces and uplands.

On the western half of the byway, from the Maryland State line to Foxhall Road, few man-made structures intrude into a corridor of leafy green vegetation. On the eastern half of the byway, from Foxhall Road to Pennsylvania Avenue, the river and the C&O Canal are often in view from the vibrant, historic urban setting of the Georgetown area. Smaller parks, such as Glover Archbold, Potomac Palisades and Battery Kemble, are relatively undisturbed natural areas and among the best of the relatively few areas in the city where native vegetation still grows. In the backyard of the nation's capital, this abundance of relatively undisturbed natural areas is remarkable.

Clara Barton Parkway, maintained by the National Park Service, presents maintained, park-like landscapes, with mowed grass shoulders on both sides of the road at this far northwestern end of the byway. Just before Chain Bridge, on the north side of Canal Road, a combination of spring water and stormwater runoff from upslope residential areas runoff exits from an arched, concrete tunnel and splashes across rock ledges before entering a box culvert. This "waterfall" is visible from Canal Road. The water passes under Canal Road and the canal itself, emerging in a rocky stream which empties into the Potomac River.

The road in the Chain Bridge to Key Bridge follows the contours of the river and the geologic formations the river and other forces have created over time: a series of terraces stepping up to the bedrock bluff. Although blocked from view by the stone wall, the canal is always within a stone's throw from the road. Near Foxhall Road, the canal is excavated into bedrock and the towpath is

elevated; here the Capital Crescent Trail descends onto a lower, younger terrace. Georgetown University occupies the high bluffs on the Piedmont Province side of the Fall Zone. Mafic rocks - gabbro, schist, soapstone, and tonalite - are exposed in the bluff above the Potomac River.

The canal in Georgetown is excavated into the bedrock of the Sykesville Formation. Vegetation along this part of the corridor is mainly restricted to street trees, parks, and landscaping. Street trees in Georgetown include ginkos, Norway maple, red oak, and willow oak. Most trees along M Street are rather small and show signs of stress, but a notable exception is a beautiful, large ginko tree on the northeast corner of M and Potomac Streets. Actually, many of the trees lining Georgetown streets are ginkos; some people, however, find them objectionable. The ginko is a living fossil, related to conifers, and the only survivor of an ancient and once wide-spread family. Long-cultivated by Buddhist priests on temple grounds in China, Japan, and Korea, ginkos are hardy trees, resistant to smoke, dust, wind, and pests. Female trees are objectionable because they produce pulpy seeds, which smell like rancid butter; the ginko nut, however, is edible.

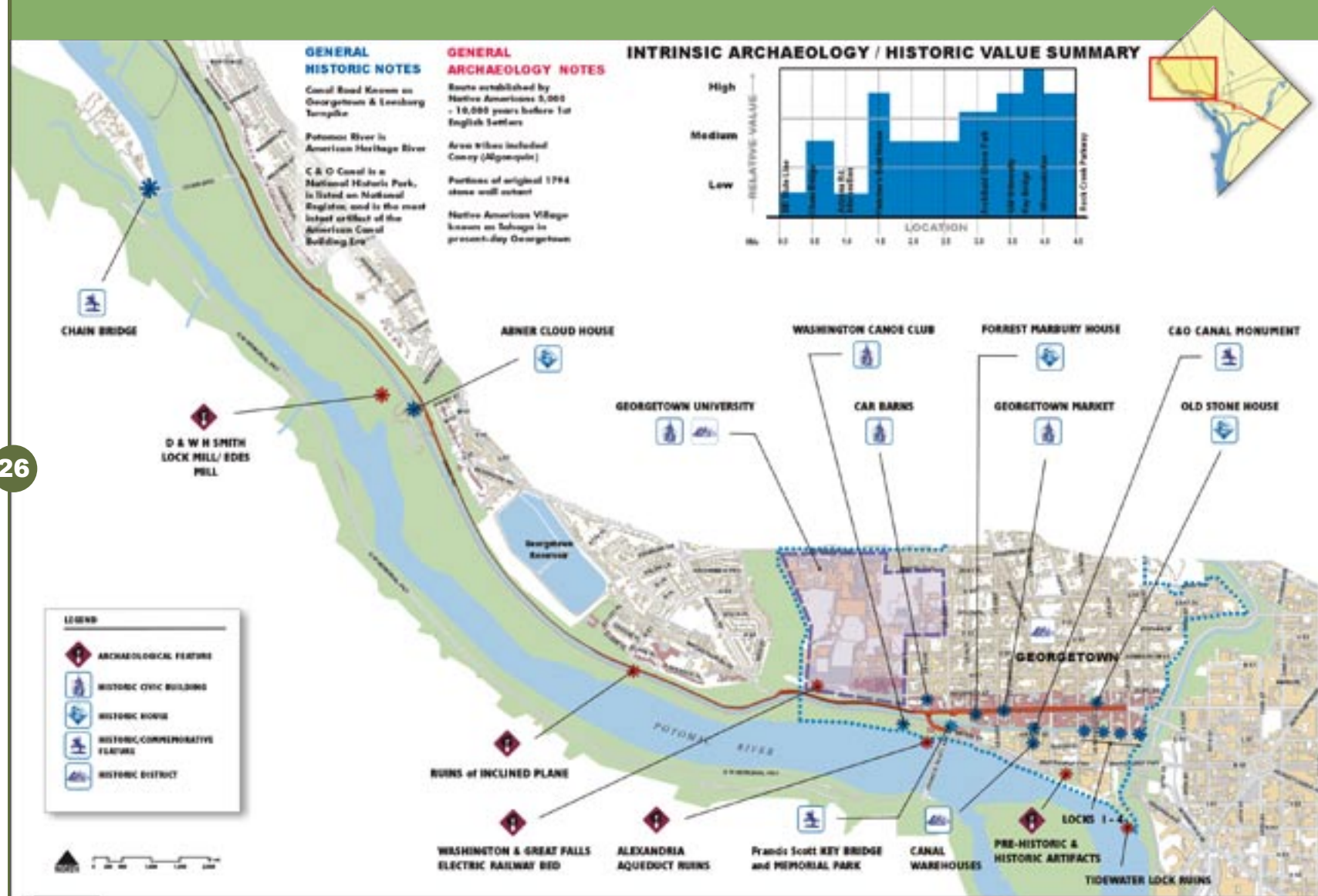
Other individual trees are notable. For example, there is a handsome weeping willow in the deep garden behind the historic Stone House. On the eastern end of M Street in Georgetown, a large tree with exposed roots stands alone on a small, triangular island bordered by M and 28th Streets, in front of the Amoco station.

Another important resource is the National Park Service's Center for Urban Ecology, which is located on MacArthur Boulevard on the edge of Rock Creek Park.

#### Notable NATURAL RESOURCES at a Glance

- Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historic Park
- Battery Kemble Park
- Clara Barton Parkway
- Francis Scott Key Park
- Glover Archbold Park
- Rock Creek Park
- Theodore Roosevelt Park





## Fig. 3-4 HISTORIC & ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### 3 Intrinsic Qualities

## Historic & Archaeological Resource Assessment

The 3.75-mile section of the Canal Road Corridor between the intersection of M Street and Wisconsin Avenue to the Maryland State line was formerly known as the Georgetown and Leesburg Turnpike. As a historic turnpike road, it connected Georgetown with Leesburg, Virginia. The Road was built in the first half of the nineteenth century in four sections by four different private turnpike companies. Canal Road was also known as the 1794 Public Road, which was part of the Potomac Route to the West. Portions of this 1794 stone wall are still intact. The Potomac Route to the West was one of the most important transportation routes in the nation from 1748 until the 1860s and is one of the oldest agricultural marketing routes in the District of Columbia.

North of M Street, there is much integrity: residential buildings and narrow tree-lined streets are evidence of 19th Century urban America. South of M Street, it is less intact: commercial redevelopment projects have altered waterfront area's character

C & O Canal is a National Historic Park, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is the most intact artifact of the American Canal Building Era.

Canal Road follows a route established by Native Americans 5,000 to 10,000 years before white settlement. The Conoy (or Piscataway) people were an Algonquin-speaking people related to the Delaware and Nanticoke and part of the Iroquois confederation. They established villages in the Potomac Gorge and on the bluffs. The area grew as a location of great economic importance to the Native Americans. Henry Fleet, an early English fur trader and explorer, described a village identified as Tahoga in what is now Georgetown.

Prehistoric human activity in the corridor is highly likely due to the proximity of the Potomac River, Fall Line, and area streams,

which would have provided ease of movement for early populations. Quartzite in bedrock could have been used to make stone tools and weapons. However, the historic use of the area is likely to have disturbed the spatial context in which remains of the prehistoric occupations might be found.

Phase I archaeological investigation conducted in 1994 uncovered 6,290 artifacts in a systematic investigation of 6-acre area (from MacArthur Road Intersection to Key Bridge). The easternmost section recovered the most artifacts and has the greatest archaeological potential. Artifacts recovered in this area were domestic artifacts and building materials that spanned from late nineteenth century to early twentieth century. Testing indicated two waves of construction: one construction period in the 1850s and one (primarily of rowhouses) in the 1890s. This area was designated as site 51NW112 by the DC historic Preservation Division. Based on data that it contains about 19th century domestic life in Georgetown and Washington DC, the study concluded that the area may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Georgetown developed as busy commercial trading center and tobacco port in 1700s, due to its strategic location. Various archaeological studies and excavations have uncovered numerous foundations and artifacts from residential and commercial sites in Georgetown.

## Notable HISTORIC/ ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES at a Glance

## Alexandria Aqueduct Ruins

## Canal Warehouses

## Car Barns

## Chain Bridge

### D&W H Smith Lock Mill / Edes Mill

## Abner Cloud House

## Georgetown Market

## Old Stone House

## Ruins of the Inclined Plane

## Washington Canoe Club

## Washington & Great Falls Electric Railway Bed Ruins

### C & O Canal Monument

Francis Scott Key Bridge &amp; Memorial Park

## Forest Marbury House

Georgetown University

## Waterfront Park Artifacts